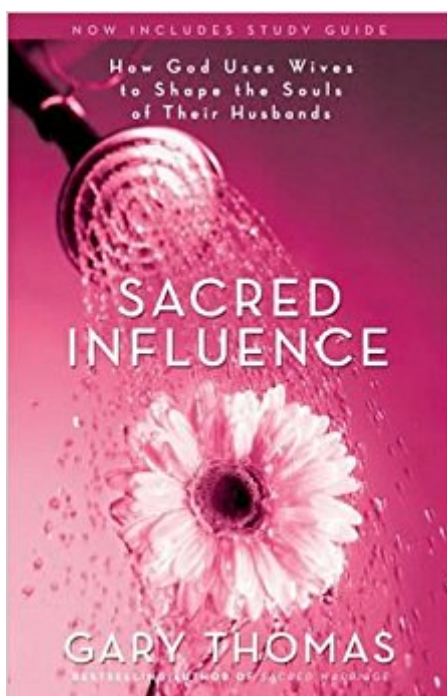


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Sacred Influence: How God Uses Wives To Shape The Souls Of Their Husbands



Synopsis

If you're sick of all the ways you've tried to bring about change in your marriage--the silent treatment, nagging, one-way discussions, or pleading--it's time to set aside those broken methods for a Christ-based approach. This book demonstrates how women can inspire, influence, and help their husbands move in positive directions. Replacing your plan of action with God's leads to a marital transformation where both partners are moving in sync, the way God intended. Gary Thomas draws concepts from his bestseller, *Sacred Marriage*, and outlines practical applications you can start using today. He also shows how marriages were transformed through these methods employed by real-life women. In these pages, you'll also find a fresh perspective to help you understand your husband: the view of the marriage relationship through a man's eyes. Thomas gives you insider information on how men think, feel, and can truly be motivated.

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Customer Reviews

If you're sick of all the ways you've tried to bring about change in your marriage---the silent treatment, nagging, one-way discussions, or pleading---it's time to set aside those broken methods for a Christ-based approach. This book demonstrates how women can inspire, influence, and help their husbands move in positive directions. Replacing your plan of action with God's leads to a marital transformation where both partners are moving in sync, the way God intended. Gary Thomas draws concepts from his bestseller, *Sacred Marriage*, and outlines practical applications

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Gary L. Thomas is Writer in Residence and serves on the teaching team at Second Baptist Church, Houston, Texas and the author of 18 books that have sold more than a million copies worldwide and have been translated into a dozen languages. He and his wife, Lisa, have been married for 30 years. ¹

This book is hopelessly stacked against women. Reading through it feels like you're wandering in the desert, desperate for water, but each time you finally reach what looks like an oasis, it's nothing more than a mirage. According to Gary Thomas this book was specifically written to help women facing difficult marriages. Yet this book still sounds so totally clueless towards understanding exactly that! In the book, *Sacred Influence*, Gary's main point is: "I want you to think about something what if your husband's faults are God's tools to shape you? What if the very thing that most bugs you about your man constitutes God's plan to teach you something new?" (p. 37-38) "Let's agree to keep this perspective in mind throughout the book." How is God using your marriage to an irritable man to teach you how to love angry people? (p. 40) "Maybe you even married a violent man. Perhaps you saw signs of this rage or violence before you married but in your eagerness to become a bride you chose to look past it or excuse it as a onetime occurrence. Maybe you thought marriage would make everything better. But now you're stuck in a frightening situation." (p. 133) Wait a minute what about willful sin? This book doesn't seem to understand the difference between setting boundaries to protect yourself from the willful sin of others and genuine trials of faith. Keep reading and you'll see how this book tries to turn someone else's willful sin into God's plan for your life when God NEVER wants anyone else to sin just to teach us something. Reading more quotes that follow you can see how this book keeps trying to shift the burden of responsibility for behavior away from the perpetrator and onto the victim. It's literally trying to make the victim feel responsible for not being patient enough with the perpetrator. And this book wants you to learn from

someone else's behavior when the perpetrator is the one who needs to learn the lesson from their own behavior! Gary continues, "Sometimes your husband would have to be in deep denial or less than human NOT to be angry with you. If you act as though anger is always illegitimate you'll merely confuse him, because asking him not to feel angry is like his asking you to never feel hurt." (p. 148) "You can't control your husband's anger but you can provoke it by being disrespectful." (p. 149) "Women in general simply don't understand how offensive and annoying it can feel to a man to be constantly challenged and corrected, especially in a disrespectful manner." (p. 150) "Maybe your side of the argument is that you don't want to put up with an angry man! Maybe what you want but don't get referring to James 4:2 is a peaceful relationship and so you are tempted to lash out with the same attitude of pride and expression of anger." (p. 152) "The time to obsess over your husband's character is before you get married not after. Once you exchange vows, you should focus only on your obligation to love." (p. 222) "Jesus couldn't have said it any clearer. If you manage to love only an easy-to-love husband why do you need God? Even non-Christian women can love a thoughtful, caring, unselfish and mature man. What credit is that to you? If you serve your husband expecting to be served in return what spiritual rewards can you hope to gain? In that case you're merely trading personal favors. But when you give and don't receive when you love those who don't know how to love or who refuse to love; when indeed you can love even the wicked and the ungrateful...you exhibit the same love that God showed to us when he loved us in our sin and rebellion. And Jesus promises that he will richly reward you." (p. 221) "But I don't believe any wife should tolerate physical abuse." (p. 95) "Some women spiritualize domestic violence. They assume it's their duty to bear up under the assault and certainly not to report it to anyone, lest their husbands get in trouble. I want to be as clear and as honest here as I can if your husband hits you both of you need help. You must speak to someone a trusted pastor, wise counselor or maybe a dear friend." (p. 152) This book is so focused on blaming women that even when telling women to seek help it still criticizes them! Then to justify blaming women this book

quotes some highly questionable "science." Gary writes, "When a woman doesn't understand the way a male brain works, she risks fostering an extremely destructive male response." (p. 107) "It's a biological fact that emotional conversation can feel very stressful for a man and actually increase his anger, particularly if that conversation gets pushed on him. If you married a man whose anger and rage seem to build the more you talk, STOP TALKING! Let your husband's brain process the stress as you wait for him to come back to you. Just because conversation calms you down doesn't mean it will have the same effect on your husband." (p. 148) Who says that conversation automatically calms down women? And if conversation is biologically stressful for men then why do men easily handle that "stress" at work? Gary quotes much of this "biology" from the book *What Could He Be Thinking?* by Michael Gurian. Researching this book on I found this review: Review of Gurian book: "I have been a practicing neurologist for seventeen years, and relating behavioral disorders to neurological conditions is my field of expertise. I know enough about the topics addressed by the author to recognize that he is a quack." "While there are grains of truth in this book, most of the supposed "science" is either badly misinterpreted or intentionally twisted to fit the author's social outlook. Most of the claimed "biological" reasons for male behavior have no basis in reality." Now to venture out of my field as a scientist - allow me to speak as a man to women thinking of buying this book "If a guy acts like a pig, it's because he is a pig. Dump him. You should hold men to high standards and they should hold you to high standards." Now back to *Sacred Influence*: Reading through this book what really got under my skin was that after blaming wives repeatedly for supposedly being the problem Gary turns around and praises mistresses. You read that correctly. On pages 115-128 this book takes a really weird detour where Gary tells wives that they aren't good enough because they haven't tried to be mistresses. Using the example of how Jeanne-Antoinette (1721-1764) rose from poverty to wealth by seducing King Louis XV, Gary writes, "The narcissistic tendencies of an eighteenth-century French king appear in men today. How can a woman handle such a man not so that she reinforces the narcissism but so that she earns the right to offer positive influence?" (p. 116) That's insulting on so many levels. First of all, wives don't have to "earn" "positive influence."

the rights granted by marriage. Wives set boundaries. Mistresses cross boundaries. It's impossible to be both. And Gary is teaching us to follow the example of a woman willing to do anything to obtain wealth and power. That's the polar opposite of how we've chosen to follow Christ by dying to the lust of the flesh, lust of the world and the pride of life. (1John 2:15-16 & Galatians 5:16). Besides, we resent the assumption that the mistress is automatically better at pleasing the husband than the wife. The Bible actually warns against believing that lie in Proverbs 9:17-18. Gary tries to deny that he's saying that then he turns around and blames women readers by saying they might "seriously misconstrue his point. (p. 124) He's trying to have it both ways when this was a completely inappropriate example to begin with. Why didn't he use the example of Queen Esther? Abigail is another great example of how a godly woman's influence saved hundreds of lives. Think about this for a moment - Gary is giving the benefit of the doubt to mistresses but he won't give that to wives! That's when you realize that this book is hopelessly stacked against women. Read further through this book and once again you see Scripture getting taken out of context. In chapter 13 he tries to make the point that women are more interested in relationships than careers and thus don't understand their husband's drive to have a career. He writes, "If you were to study the brains of a man and a woman while they gazed into the eyes of a child or grandchild, you would see that the typical female gets more out of such an encounter physically than does the male. Relationships simply reward you more than they tend to reward your husband. (p. 175) Then on page 177 he quotes Matthew 10:37-38 which says we must love Christ more than our families. Gary writes, "From a biological point of view, this a very "male" statement that must seem abhorrent to many females until they realize that Jesus himself spoke those words. (p. 177) Then he accuses women of having, "a female view of the world, though not necessarily a biblical one. (p. 177) OUCH! Wait a minute - in Matthew 10:37-38 Jesus was talking directly to BOTH women AND men when He told us to follow Him. That's not a male perspective. That's a Christian perspective. Why would Gary insult all the ladies by assuming we automatically care more about our families than taking up our cross and following Christ? There's so many other deeply troubling quotes in this book that we could discuss but by

now Gary's attitude towards women is pretty obvious and very troubling.

I read this book based in the impact Sacred Marriage had made on my marriage, life and outlook. Although it is filled with much truth and I learned a great deal, I was disappointed to have not known the audience he was writing to before I started in. The book seems to be written to women who's marriages are in turmoil at the moment. Although I say this, it is always healthy to have a prospective of these things for future reference or for cross-relational development with others. It is a great read, but I would recommend Sacred Marriage more.

I found this book at a time that a distance had grown between my husband and I. Gary Thomas is very good at describing the ways a wife can help her husband yet stay out of God's way while He is maturing our husbands.

I find this very challenging as a wife and know if I would keep living out the advice shared in this book our marriage would be much better and I would be also. Very helpful for spiritual growth.

The reading is in depth and like reading a text book - there is a LOT to learn, take in and process. So far has been helpful to understand and work towards progress.

There were times I wanted go stop reading it for the harsh truth it was telling, but then it would say something like, "now I am only saying this because you as the wife need to know". This is a great tool to have for the woman that is looking to improve as a godly wife and to encourage her husband to improve as a godly husband.

This book has something for every wife no matter what stage of marriage you are in. I appreciate the male point of view. This book has help me understand my husband in a deeper way, and has also helped me see myself more clearly . I recommend this book to any woman who is looking to improve her marriage .

Gary Thomas knows God's reason for marriage and the importance of marriage If you question why you are married or don't understand God's purpose for it buy this book and read it. Saturate yourself in the message of wisdom and purpose of marriage.

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